

City of Rochester FIRE DEPARTMENT



2009 Annual Report

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2009 Annual Report

Rochester Fire Department

201 4th Street SE

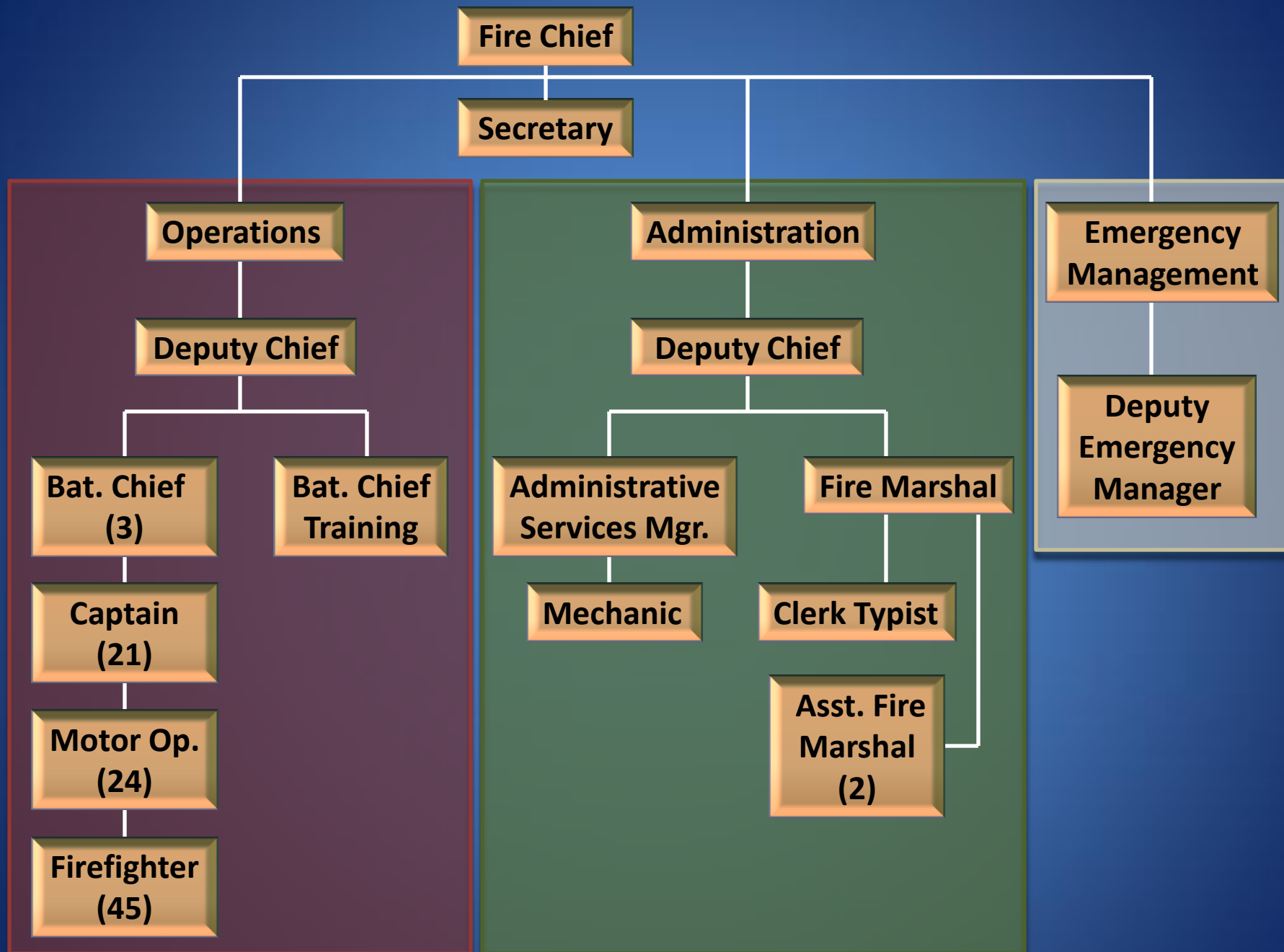
Rochester, MN 55904-3726

507.328.2800

www.Rochestermn.gov/departments/fire

Mission Statement

“The mission of the Rochester Fire Department is to work within the community to provide the highest level of protection for life, property, and economic stability.”



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RFD By The Numbers

Coverage

Area	130.1 Acres
City	53.8 Acres
Pop.	113,848
City	101,659
Rural	12, 189

Budget

2009	\$13,133,607
Per Capita	\$115.36

Staffing/Equipment

Firefighters	107
Civilian Staff	4
Fire Stations	5
Engines	5
Aerial Trucks	2
Lt. Rescue	2
Hazmat (CAT)	1
Collapse Rescue (SRT)	1
Command Van	1
Tanker	2

Rochester Fire Administration



**Deputy Chief
Dan Slavin
Operations**



**FIRE CHIEF
Greg Martin**



**Deputy Chief
Lyle Felsch
Administration**



**Secretary
Teresa Wegner**



**Administrative
Services Manager
Curt Pronk**

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**Clerk Typist
Denise Kollasch**

Administrative Services



The Administrative Services program assignments include budget, facilities, fleet, grants, and department liaison for risk management and information services. The Fire Department has worked to adapt to the difficult budget times the City and State are realizing. We were able to direct capital improvement funds for key infrastructure projects needed such as upgraded the speakers in the apparatus bays of Stations 1, 3 & 4, and replacing the concrete turnaround at Station 4.

Vehicles



The department took delivery of two new Pierce fire engines in 2009, funded through the revolving vehicle replacement program. This purchase was made through the City of Houston/Galveston (TX) Consortium bid which is available nationally. The city was able to experience very significant cost savings by using this existing bid process, which still allowed the department to purchase through a local fire truck vender. A third engine is scheduled for delivery in late summer 2010 under the same bid and again with significant savings to the city.

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Operations Division



Battalion Chief
Tim Bangert
Battalion One



Battalion Chief
Chuck Hermann
Battalion Two



Battalion Chief
Steve Belau
Battalion Three

**Rochester Fire Department
521 South Broadway
Rochester, MN 5590
507-285-8965**

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Emergency Services

The Rochester Fire Department is a full service fire department and continues to provide efficient and effective all risk emergency response to the citizens of the Rochester community.

In line with our stated mission to “work within the community to provide the highest level of protection for life, property and economic stability”, the members of the Rochester Fire Department responded to over 7500 incidents and calls for service in 2009. These calls range from lift assists for the infirm to calls to extinguish fires in high rise buildings.



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Emergency Services



The City of Rochester continues to be a major economic engine within the State of Minnesota, as the 3rd largest city in the state and a newly designated “City of the First Class”. As such, significant fire and life safety challenges are posed for a department of its size in comparison to similar cities. With 107 sworn firefighters or 1.05 per 1000

population, Rochester Fire ranks favorably with comparable cities, St. Cloud, MN at 1.65, Duluth at 1.5 and the 2007 ICMA average for other cities of the same size at 1.86 per 1000 population.

Rochester Fire staffs 5 front line engines and two aerial trucks operating out of 5 fire stations with a minimum daily staffing of 25 fire fighters on duty. During 2009 there were three unfilled positions due to budget constraints.

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Emergency Medical



Providing fast, efficient and effective emergency response to citizen medical emergencies remains key commitment of the fire department. Medical emergencies are the single largest category of emergency response again this year. With nearly 5000 runs in 2009, EMS

calls represent 65% of the department's day to day emergency services to the citizens. Using an integrated team approach with Fire, Police and Gold Cross Ambulance, we assure that EMS calls get the closest available responder with the training and equipment needed arriving in the shortest possible time.

Emergency Medical



EXPANDED SERVICES - The fire department is expanding and improving the services provided to the community. More advanced EMS skills and techniques are being added in 2010. Training in advanced airway care, basic pharmacology instruction will allow fire department EMTs to help people experiencing breathing problems, chest pain, diabetic emergencies, asthma, and acute allergic reactions to such things as bee stings or food allergies. The initial care started by the fire fighters dovetails seamlessly into the advanced care brought to the patient by the Gold Cross Paramedics.

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Emergency Medical

Expanded EMS education is one part of the new training initiative under development by Battalion Chief Eric Kerska in the Training Division. In addition to maintaining a high degree of professionalism and competency, the EMS training initiative will also streamline the national recertification process that all fire department members must undergo every two years.

EMS in the Rochester Fire Department remains an efficient use of firefighter time and talents and represents an added service of very high value to the citizens and visitors of Rochester.

Rescue

- Vehicle Extrication
- High Angle Rescue
- Water and Ice Rescue
- Confined Space Rescue
- Structural Collapse Rescue

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Rescue

2010 will see a revamping of the Rochester Fire Department rescue program. We have completed an inventory of all rescue equipment carried on our apparatus and identified any existing discrepancies. Our first priority for 2010 will be to assure all vehicles are properly and uniformly equipped. Training in the different specialty areas of rescue will be a priority in 2010. The initial focus will be high and low angle rope rescue and confined space rescue training.



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Structural Collapse Rescue



During 2009 we sent 5 members of the Structural Collapse Team (SCT) to Search Specialist Training and 2 members to Logistics Specialist training. This training will enhance the Minnesota State Response capabilities regionally

as well as locally. This continuation of the skill maintenance program in which training was completed in shoring, confined space and rope rescue skills. There was also an increase in the equipment cache and training in for water and ice rescue. This was necessary due to the pre-determined likelihood of a flood emergency response by our team.

Structural Collapse Rescue

Also in 2010, there is a full Minnesota State Team training exercise scheduled for September involving a four operation period. The main focus of the exercise will be initial response and set up of our Base of Operation (BOO) and the transition period between work cycles. The BOO will be the major asset purchase for the state team. The bid has been accepted and delivery is expected in May/June of 2010.



A major change this year will be a decrease of team size from 30 to 22 members. This was necessary when the program directors decreased state team staffing of 220, down to 160 total staffing. This will be done through attrition and resignations.

A photograph of an emergency scene on a residential street. In the foreground, a white Terex crane truck is parked with its boom extended. To its right, a red fire truck is visible. Further back, another red fire truck and a white utility truck are parked. The street is lined with trees and houses. The scene appears to be a hazardous material spill or a major accident.

Hazardous Material

State Chemical Assessment Team (CAT)

Tanker Vehicle Crash Scenes

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

Bio-Hazard Incidents

Gas and Petroleum Pipeline Breaks

Rochester fire responded to 54 natural gas line breaks in 2009. This is slightly up from 2008. Many of these are due to road construction and construction contractor digging operations.

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Training Division



Battalion Chief
Eric Kerska
Training Division

In 2009, the Training Captain position was upgraded to Battalion Chief as a means to strengthen and add depth to the availability of back-up Chief Officers during major or multiple emergencies. This also is expected to provide better integration of training, safety and best practices and should result in greater accountability and a higher level of operational consistency. The Battalion Chiefs will rotate through this position to give them a more, well rounded fire service leadership experience and better preparing them for career advancement.

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Training



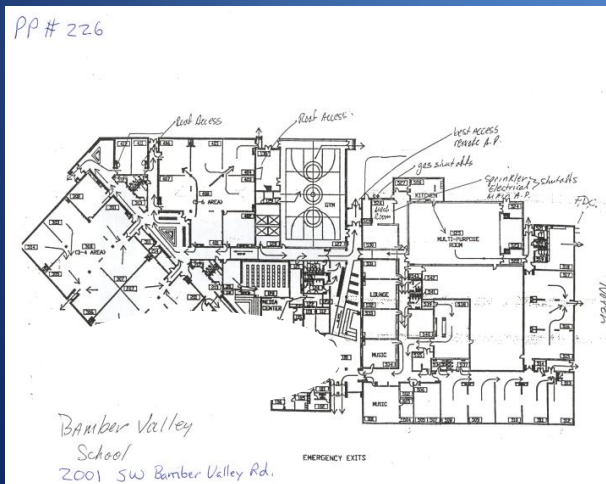
The 2009 training year concentrated on the refinement of a fire fighter accountability system and incident command system that ensures the safety of firefighters operating at an emergency scene of any size large or small. Stewart Rose, a retired chief officer from Seattle, WA presented this training. HAZMAT training required for state certification continued with multiple sessions of chemical detection. Training continued not only on firefighter tasks, but rescue, HAZMAT, and EMS training necessary for the protection of Rochester's citizens and property. The recruit academy was run in late fall for the four new firefighters.

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Preplans



Captain Matthew Mueller is working on a project that will provide electronic access of vital building information for almost 4000 commercial structures within our response area. Working with the software vendor. Captain Mueller has been providing direct input toward updating, development and implementation of the software which will provide the ability to not only accurately input data but allow easier access to this information via mobile data terminals (MDT).



The significance is the direct connection of RFD into the process to customize the software for direct input of critical building data by fire staff and also provide quick access of this data by the incident commander via MDT at fire emergencies to commercial buildings.

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Preplans



Beginning again in 2010, updating of building pre-fire plans by individual fire companies will be used to collect up to date building data by meeting on-site with the building representatives and conducting a physical walk-through of each commercial structure within their assigned response districts. This provides the unique opportunity to answer any questions the building owner/representative may have concerning fire safety and allow the crews to obtain firsthand knowledge of the building layout and to collaboratively design a tactical worksheet for future responses.

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Fire Prevention



Assistant
Fire Marshal
Dennis Olson



Fire Marshal
Vance Swisher



Assistant
Fire Marshal
Jason Whitney

The Rochester Fire Department has a long history in fire prevention, beginning in 1866 when the department appointed a Fire Warden to inspect for and correct fire hazards in each of the City's three wards. Today, the Fire Prevention Bureau continues this tradition with a Fire Marshal and two Assistant Fire Marshal's who provide proactive prevention efforts in three general program areas; Fire Investigation, Code Enforcement, and Public Education.

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Fire Prevention



The Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible to work with architects, engineers, and contractors to ensure that adequate fire department access and water supply is provided for new and newly expanded city buildings; fire protection equipment is properly installed and the property properly protected.

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Code Enforcement



This year 178 fire protection equipment installation permits were issued, 408 building construction plans reviewed, and 350 new construction inspections were completed. Rochester Fire Marshal's also respond to a broad range of requests for fire and life safety services in new and existing businesses.

The Fire Prevention Bureau responded to over 250 requests for general fire code inspections, citizen concerns, and correction of fire code violations. The Fire Prevention Bureau also issued 370 annual Fire Permits to businesses conducting hazardous and other regulated operations within the City of Rochester.

PUBLIC EDUCATION



Rochester Fire is committed to providing the community with fire and life safety education. However as the city has continued to grow and the demands on the Fire Prevention Bureau increases, the ability to provide continuous and effective public education by the Fire Marshal's has been greatly over stressed.



Over the last year, Rochester Fire has limited its public education efforts to fire station and school tours by on duty fire crews. The Fire Prevention Bureau is working diligently to use the Internet and other alternative methods to continue providing this important life safety education to our community in the coming years.

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Fire Investigation



The Rochester Fire Department is the lead agency for fire investigations within the City of Rochester and insures that all fires are investigated for origin and cause. Suspicious and arson fires are diligently investigated by Rochester Fire Marshals in partnership with the Rochester Police Department and Olmsted County Attorney's Office.



In 2009, Rochester Fire Marshals opened investigations into 45 fires which lead to the prosecution and conviction of 6 individuals for crimes ranging from arson to criminal damage to property.

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Emergency Management



Deputy Emergency
Manager

In 2009 the Common Council amended Code of Ordinances creating a Division of Emergency Management within the Rochester Fire Department. Fire Chief Martin assumed the role of Emergency Manager and began the process of writing the City of Rochester Emergency Management Plan. A budget was approved providing funding to hire a Deputy Emergency Manager in June of 2010.

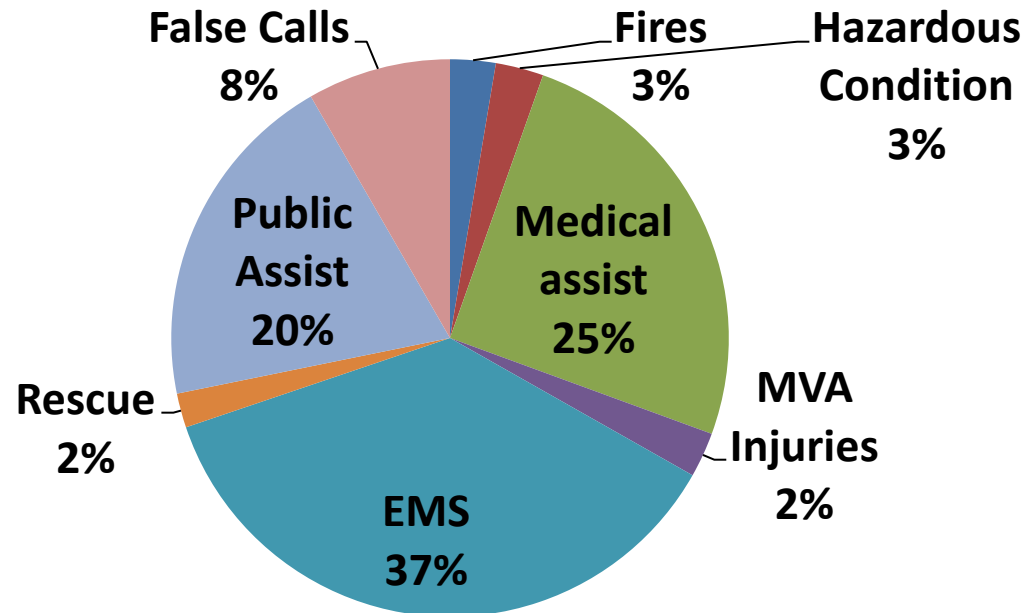
Calls for Service



	2009	2008
Total Calls for Service	7,585	7719
EMS	4,935	5096
Fire	200	232
Rescue	148	187
Hazmat	135	129
Public Assist*	1,726	1397
False Calls	441	678

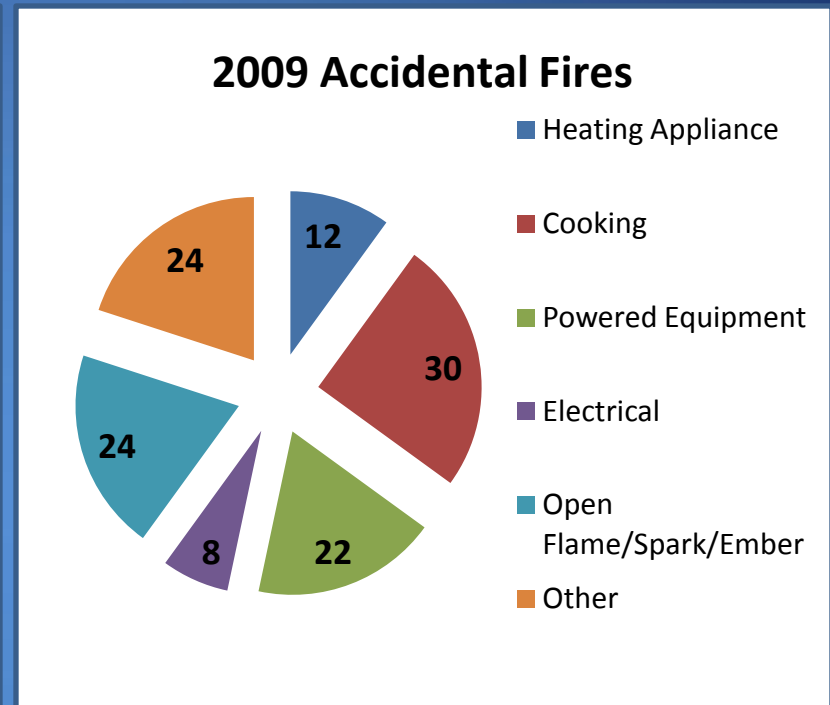
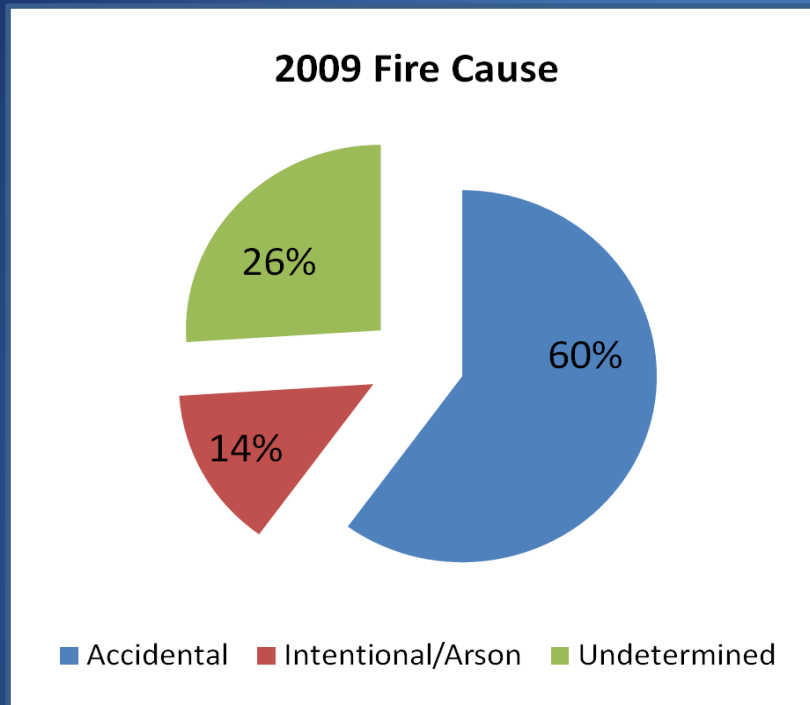
*Large change due in part to reclassification of “good intent” and “canceled calls” as “public assist” instead of “false calls”.

2009 Incident Breakdown



Emergency Medical calls and Medical Assist calls include all calls where firefighters are called as EMT first responders to a medical emergency and initiate medical care and/or assist Gold Cross Ambulance Paramedics in preparing patients for transport to St. Marys Hospital. Public assist includes anything from lock-ins to lift assists for uninjured fall victims.

Fire Causes

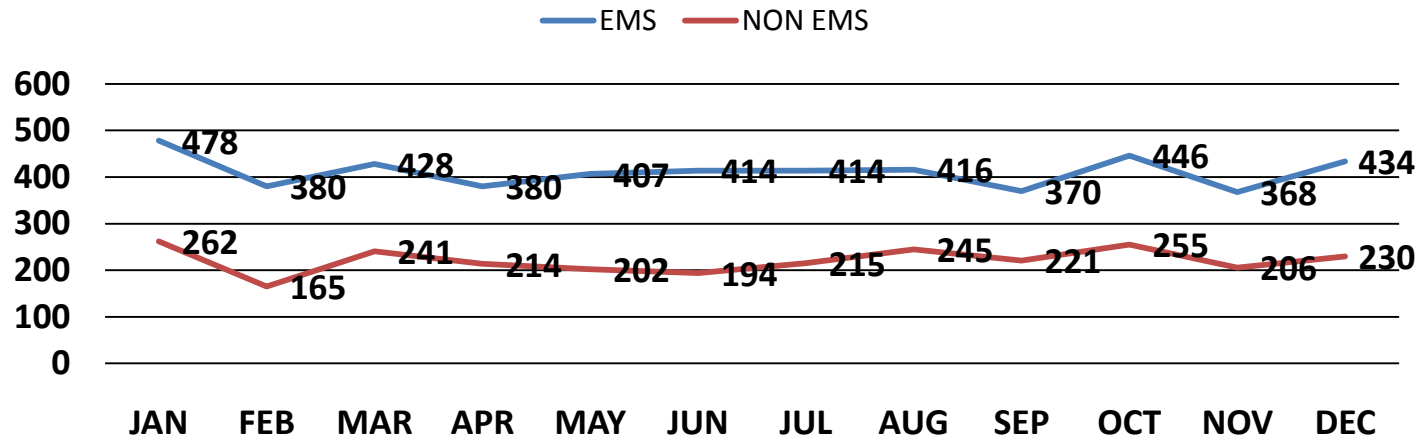


Unattended cooking continues to be the leading cause of accidental fires, followed by smoking and open flame causes.

While there were no fire fatalities in Rochester in 2009, Nationally, alcohol and drug impairment is a leading factor in fire fatalities, both in smoking related fires and unattended cooking fires.

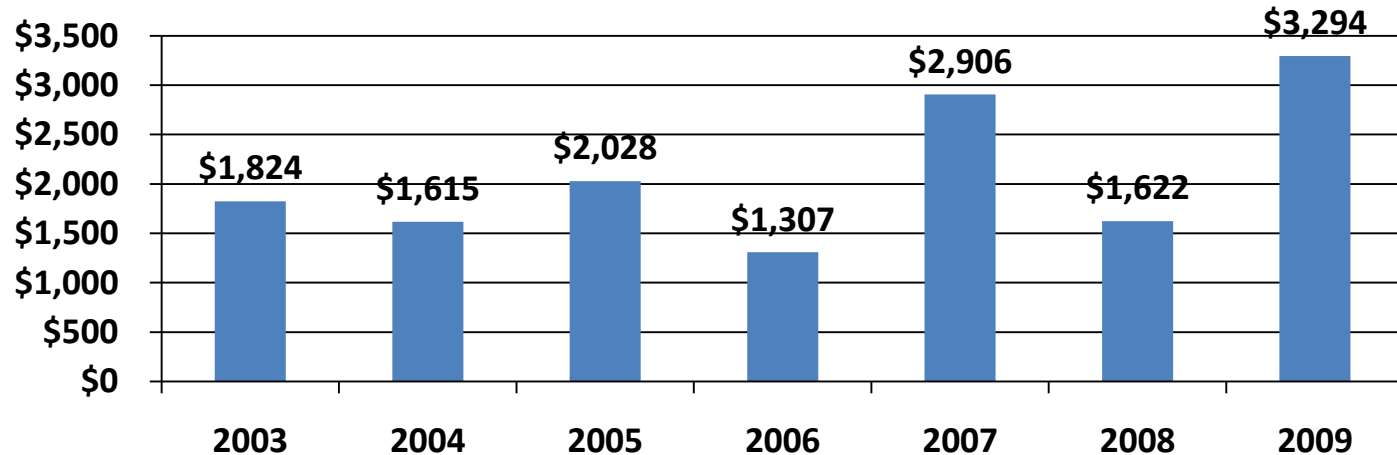
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2008 Runs by Month



Fire Loss History

In thousands



2009 loss is distorted by a single rural residential fire of \$850,000.

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2009 Staff Changes

Promotions

Battalion Chief

Tim Bangert

Eric Kerska

Captain

Kris Jungels

Gary Kittleson

David Fitzgerald

Motor Operator

Craig Connelly

Rebecca Teal

Firefighter Appointments

Kristopher Clark

Brandon Hageman

Spencer Sweeney

Nicholas Wiese

Retirements

Loren Hewitt

Ed Capek

Scott Fanning

Todd Lund

Richard Lovett

Mark Keefe

Resignations

Dylan Mills

Spencer Goetzman

becomeafirefighter.org

why I became a firefighter....

I became a firefighter to make a difference and **save lives.**

why I became a firefighter....

I became a firefighter so I could help the people that live in my **community.**

Firefighting is a career I can be proud of.

Being a firefighter is a serious and rewarding career. A career that can be yours. To find out how you can become a firefighter in Rochester, MN, visit our website at **becomeafirefighter.org**

ROCHESTER FIRE DEPT.
The hand to reach for...

Firefighter recruitment efforts continue in an effort to attract more young men and women to consider firefighting as a career path. The becomeafirefighter.org website has been a very popular site and hopefully will improve the diversity within the fire service as well as the Rochester Fire Department .

In memorial

This memorial located at the north entrance to Silver Lake Park is dedicated to Rochester Firefighters that have lost their lives selflessly serving the citizens of this community.

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2009 Incident Photos



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2009 Incident Photos



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